

1. Introduction and Purpose (Leader of the Council)

- 1.1. This Community Benefits Strategy has been developed to align with all of Flintshire's Capital and Services procurement and the authority's existing approaches to delivery of Community Benefits within its contracts and service provision. An innovative approach is required to ensure delivery of community benefits, which helps to deliver the greatest economic, social or environmental wellbeing benefit to local communities.
- 1.2. The public sector in Wales spends £5.5bn per year on external goods and services, and Welsh Government is committed to capturing and retaining as much of the local investment in the local area through their Community Benefits Policy. The Community Benefits Strategy supports the Welsh Government's vision that sustainable development will be the central organising principle for Wales. It also contributes to other policy areas such as the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan, tackling poverty in Wales and adding to the resources for training and skills development.
- 1.3. The Wales Procurement Policy Statement sets out the procurement practices and actions required of all public sector organisations in Wales. Value Wales helps the Welsh public sector realise improved value for money through 'smarter procurement' by:
 - increasing savings through collaboration;
 - improving process efficiency especially through use of technology;
 - protecting the economy by encouraging smaller and more local suppliers and seeking re-investment in local communities; and
 - building procurement capability.
- 1.4. A key policy driver is the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its 7 goals including 'A Prosperous Wales' and 'A More Equal Wales'.
- 1.5. At a local level, the Flintshire Public Service Board is developing new approaches to Inspiring Resilient Communities and the Community Benefits Strategy will play apart in the delivery of this.
- 1.6. The Community Benefits Strategy will help to deliver the Flintshire County Council's Council Plan by contributing to:
 - supporting people to manage the ongoing impact of Welfare Reform through helping people to claim the benefits to which they are entitled;
 - helping people to manage their financial commitments;
 - reducing the impact of rises in fuel costs through energy efficiency measures;
 - developing programmes in partnership with the social and third sector to work towards addressing food poverty;
 - reducing demand for public services;
 - growing the role of the social enterprise sector;
 - increasing the impact of the voluntary sector
 - contributing to the scale and quality of apprenticeship and work experience provision; and
 - Increasing the use of community benefit clauses in procurement.

- 1.7. The Community Benefit Strategy aims to support the delivery of these strategic policy areas by ensuring that the procurement and delivery of capital and service contracts contributes to the delivery of sustainable outcomes. The Council procured £145m of works, goods and services in 2016/2017.
- 1.8. Specific community benefit requirements will be incorporated into future procurement and contracts providing a clear direction of the key priorities identified in this Strategy and the issues to be addressed in Flintshire at the time of the contract. These will be progressed through the Contractor and the Procurement and Enterprise and Regeneration Teams within the Council, working collaboratively with local communities, other partners and stakeholders.

2. Aim and objectives of the Community Benefits Strategy

Aim

- 2.1. The aim of the strategy is to ensure greater value for money with regard to securing a return on the expenditure Flintshire County Council is making each year through service contracts and capital programmes.

Objectives

- 2.2. To provide a framework which ensures the inclusion of realistic and achievable community benefit via contractual clauses in all applicable capital programme and service contracts.
- 2.3. To provide a joined up approach to the identifying and monitoring of community benefits across Flintshire, ensuring maximum value for money of spend on the Capital programme and service budgets.
- 2.4. Create an internal infrastructure to avoid duplication of effort, share best practice, maximise opportunities for leveraging community benefits from suppliers and provide a more common and consistent experience for suppliers.
- 2.5. To ensure compliance within legislative framework when incorporating community benefits into the contracts and agreements.
- 2.6. Through guidance and the application of agreed approaches, deliver real and lasting benefits to our stakeholders and to grow the Flintshire economy, including the delivery of sustainable employment outcomes for residents.

3. Delivery approach

- 3.1. As part of the procurement process tenderers will be asked to set out how they will contribute to the community benefit objectives and will be assessed as part of the tender evaluation. This will include areas such as:
 - the steps to be taken to deliver community benefits;
 - how these steps will ensure benefits are realised; and
 - the benefit that each step will deliver to communities.
- 3.2. All contractual community benefits form part of the contract and suppliers have a contractual obligation to deliver these commitments. Appropriate contract conditions will be included to provide a remedy for failure to deliver contractual community benefits.
- 3.3. Community benefits will be delivered through specific requirements stipulated within the specification. This will be done in one of three ways.

- (i) Through contract clauses;
 - (ii) Through specifying as outcomes and outputs core to the contract for a contractor to tender against;
 - (iii) Through specifying as ways of working associated with the contract for a contractor to tender against.
- 3.4. Proportionality will be applied in relation to the level of Community Benefits to the value of the contract. As a guide Flintshire Council would expect for contracts of a value of £1m or more:
- 1 Apprenticeship per £1m spend.
- 3.5. On award of the contract Flintshire Council's Enterprise and Regeneration Team will manage the delivery of the Community Benefit, including where appropriate receipt of any financial sums and subsequent expenditure in line with the Council's strategic priorities, and the co-ordination of wider community benefit delivery.
- 3.6. Flintshire County Council will apply the benchmarks set by Value Wales toolkit and use the principles for measuring the impact.

4. Priorities

- 4.1. All community benefits should aim to provide as wide an impact as feasible both in terms of geography and beneficiaries. The priority for community benefits are set out below.

Economic

I. Targeted recruitment and training:

- Providing shared apprenticeship opportunities;
- Creating job opportunities for unemployed people from Flintshire's Community First areas;
- Providing work placements and training opportunities to local unemployed people, to help them gain work experience to aid their job search;
- Providing work experience to students to help them make career choices.

II. Supporting procuring from locally based businesses (where appropriate and this enables better value for money delivery of the contract) to provide goods and services in the delivery of the contract;

Environmental, health and social

III. Working with schools and colleges to contribute to their curriculum and help to promote a socially inclusive society;

IV. Where deemed appropriate, small community-focused contributions can be made including actual resources such as staff time to provide assistance / support to local community groups. This would be administered through the Economy and Regeneration Team to ensure appropriate use.

V. Provide a financial sum (where appropriate) or equivalent non-financial benefit to deliver the strategic priorities as identified by Flintshire Council including but not exclusively:

- Housing quality and renewable technologies as part of any new build development;

- Housing energy measures which will address fuel poverty;
- Promoting energy efficiencies and environmental awareness with tenants;
- Delivery of environmental initiatives including:
 - micro-energy generation;
 - reduced waste to landfill;
 - recycling of eligible materials;
 - reduced water consumption; and
 - managing business mileage.

VI. Reductions in demand for public services including health and social care and community safety by:

- increasing the people supported to live independently;
- reducing permanent admissions to residential or nursing care;
- reducing avoidable hospital admissions; and
- reducing anti-social behaviour and crime.

VII. Increasing the impact of volunteers in delivering public and community services by:

- increasing the number of new volunteers;
- increasing the number of volunteers placed with community groups; and
- increasing the number of young volunteers

VIII. Increasing the impact of community businesses in delivering public and community services by:

- increasing the number of new community businesses established;
- increasing the number of constituted groups developing into community businesses; and
- increasing the number of community assets sustained.

5. Allocation, Monitoring and Reporting

- 5.1. To ensure fairness and consistency across the whole county, the level of contributions will be managed through the contracting process and monitored by the Procurement Team.
- 5.2. The Enterprise and Regeneration Team will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the community benefits either through the Contractor or the intermediary responsible for delivery, working closely with the Council's Contract Programme Manager.
- 5.3. All performance indicators relating to Contractor Community Benefits will be monitored and reviewed by Cabinet on an annual basis.
- 5.4. This Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it continues to evolve with the service contracts and capital expenditure.